



## Operation Guardian of the Walls

The Iranian-backed Hamas terror organization has launched hundreds of rockets into Israel, targeting dense civilian populations in cities, towns and villages. Jerusalem, Israel's capital, and the Tel Aviv metropolitan area were also targeted.

Topic: [Terrorism](#) Secondary topic: [Operation Guardian of the Walls](#)

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Magen David Adom emergency teams at the scene of a Hamas rocket attack. © Photo: Magen David Adom.



Damage in Holon caused by a rocket attack from Gaza. Three were injured in the attack. © TPS/Eitan Elhadez-Barak

Since the beginning of the attacks on Monday (10 May, 2021), thousands of rockets have been launched by the Iranian-backed Hamas terror organization from the Gaza Strip towards Israeli towns and cities, including the capital of Israel, Jerusalem.

In the initial barrage of over 150 rockets, two residents of the city of Ashkelon were killed and dozens were injured. The attacks put hundreds of thousands of Israelis under the threat of rocket fire, and classes have been canceled in many parts of the country.

The attacks perpetrated by the Hamas terror organization essentially constitute a double war crime: indiscriminate attacks on a civilian population originating from within a civilian population.

Moral responsibility for this deterioration and for those harmed on both sides falls entirely on Hamas and the terrorist organizations. Israel calls on the international community to unequivocally condemn the Palestinians' rocket fire and terrorist activities against Israeli civilians, to recognize Israel's right to protect its citizens, and to work with the Palestinian Authority to immediately stop the incitement and violence.

### **Hamas attack update:**

Operation Guardian of the Walls operational update 17 May 2021.

Source: IDF Spokesperson.

**Monday, 10 May:**

Up until 11:30 p.m., approximately 150 rockets had been fired from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory. Dozens of these were intercepted by the Iron Dome Aerial Defense System. A large proportion of the rockets fell in the Gaza Strip itself, causing injuries and damage to the local population.

In response to the continuous rocket fire from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory, the IDF struck several terror targets belonging to the Hamas terror organization in the Gaza Strip including an offensive terror tunnel, two rocket launchers and two military posts.

**Tuesday, 11 May:**

According to the IDF, up until 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, approximately 480 rockets had been fired from the Gaza Strip towards Israeli territory, including the Tel Aviv metropolitan area. Approximately 150 rockets that were fired from the Gaza Strip exploded inside the Gaza Strip.

In response, overnight, the IDF struck a number of significant terror targets and terror operatives across the Gaza Strip, including a building that housed the organization's military intelligence and Judea and Samaria headquarters. The IDF also struck another building that housed the headquarters of the organization's intelligence unit, the Hamas Judea and Samaria headquarters, its Public Relations department and the Gaza Brigade.

Prior to the strike, the IDF provided advance warning to civilians in the building and provided sufficient time for them to evacuate the site.



Iron Dome intercepting Hamas rockets over Ashdod. Photo:© Flash90/Avi Roccah.

**Wednesday, 12 May:**

In continuation of the overnight attacks, earlier this morning the IDF completed a wave of strikes, striking the houses belonging to senior Hamas operatives that also served as terrorist infrastructure.

Earlier, the IDF, in coordination with the ISA, struck a building in which operatives from the Hamas terror organization's military intelligence apparatus were present. [Several senior operatives were killed in the attack](#), including Hassan Kaogi, Head of the Hamas Military Intelligence Security Department and his deputy Wail Issa, Head of the Military Intelligence Counter Espionage Department. Issa was the brother of Marwan Issa, Deputy Commander of the Hamas terror organization.

**Thursday, 13 May**

According to the IDF, up until 8 p.m. tonight, approximately 1750 rockets had been launched from the Gaza Strip towards Israeli territory. Approximately 300 rockets failed to launch properly and fell in the Gaza Strip, causing destruction and injuries to the local population. The Iron Dome Aerial Defense System intercepted hundreds of rockets.

The IDF continued to attack Hamas strategic position overnight, and by early morning reported that it had hit over 600 terror targets, including the terror infrastructure located in the residence of a Hamas Battalion Commander.

IDF fighter jets also struck weapon manufacturing sites in various location in the GAZA Strip including a main military missile manufacturing site belonging to the Hamas terror organization and a military post belonging to the Hamas naval force also used as a military missile manufacturing site.

In addition, the IDF struck other military weapon manufacturing sites belonging to the terror organizations, along the Gaza Strip as well as the Hamas Internal Security Headquarters building and a weapons storage facility.



Hamas terrorist preparing an arson balloon in the Gaza Strip, prior to launching into Israel.© Photo: TPS/Majdi Fathi.

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### **Friday, 14 May**

The IDF reports that as of 7 p.m. today (Friday) over 2000 rockets have been launched from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory since the beginning of Operation Guardian of the Walls. Approximately 350 failed launches fell in the Gaza Strip; The Iron Dome Air Defense System has intercepted close to 1000 rockets.

The IDF continued to attack Hamas installations overnight. Israel Airforce squadrons struck over 150 underground targets in the northern Gaza Strip. At the same time, IDF ground forces deployed along the border attacked targets in the Gaza Strip destroying many kilometers of the strategically important underground tunnel network belonging to Hamas.

During the day, several attempted terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria were thwarted by IDF forces. At the same time, the IDF continued to attack various Hamas installations in the Gaza Strip, including a cyber-equipment storage facility of the Hamas cyber unit, Hamas naval force targets, additional Hamas weapons manufacturing warehouses and a tunnel shaft belonging to the Hamas terror organization.

The IDF also destroyed a building housing a branch of the Islamic National Bank, which served as a terrorist vault for Hamas. This strike was particularly significant because not only did it handle the funding of the Hamas rocket production operation but also the day-to-day cash flow of Hamas and its military wing, and severely compromised Hamas' financial administration.

### **Saturday, 15 May**

The IDF continued to attack strategic Hamas targets overnight. The IDF attacked and destroyed a Hamas military intelligence site and several surface-to-surface rocket launch sites and terrorist squads. Homes belonging to several senior Hamas commanders that also served as military infrastructure were also struck in the IDF attacks.

A heavy barrage aimed at dense population areas in central Israel was launched from the Gaza Strip just after midnight. No casualties were reported.

### **Sunday, 16 May**

As of 7 p.m. on Sunday, approximately 3,100 rockets have been fired from the Gaza Strip at Israeli territory since the beginning of Operation Guardian of the Walls. There were approximately 450 failed launches that fell in the Gaza Strip, causing casualties and damage to property. The Iron Dome Air Defense System intercepted approximately 1210 rockets.

The IDF continued to attack on Sunday, amidst heavy barrages of rockets launched from the Gaza Strip at dense Israeli population areas.

The IDF struck and destroyed a Hamas tunnel network in the Khan Yunis area in the southern Gaza Strip. The tunnel contained military equipment and was located adjacent to a kindergarten, a mosque and a hospital. The IDF also attacked and destroyed weapons warehouses and other terrorist infrastructure.

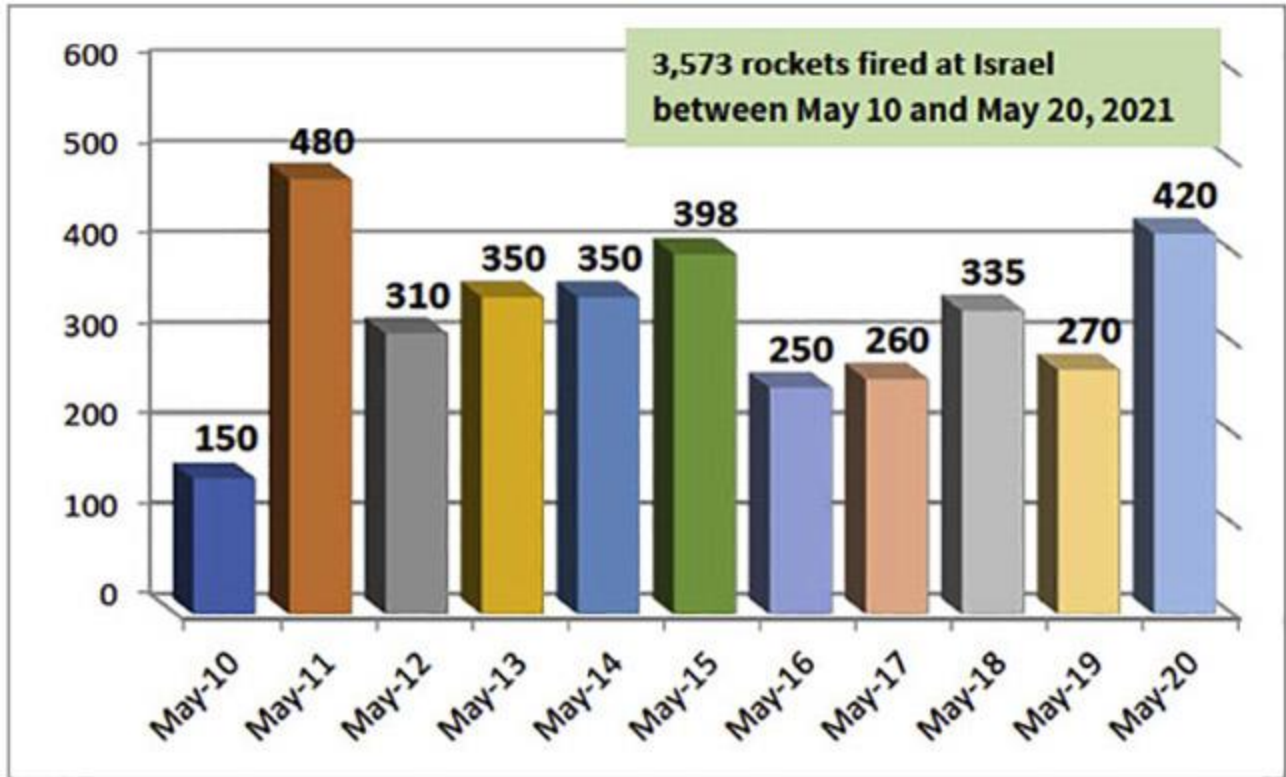
### **Monday, 17 May**

As of 7 a.m. on Monday, approximately 3,150 rockets have been launched from the Gaza Strip at Israeli territory since the beginning of Operation Guardian of the Walls. There were approximately 460 failed launches of rockets that fell in the Gaza Strip, causing casualties and damage to property. The Iron Dome Air Defense System has an intercept rate of approximately 90%.

The IDF continued its attacks on terrorist targets and infrastructure amidst heavy barrages of rockets launched from the Gaza Strip at dense Israeli population areas.

The Israel Navy thwarted terror activity in the northern Gaza Strip, destroying a Hamas submersible naval weapon on its way to carry out a terror attack in Israeli waters. In addition, the IDF struck the main operations center of the Hamas Internal Security Forces in the Rimal neighborhood. In a joint IDF-ISA operation, Israeli security forces were able to target Hasam Abu Harbid, Commander of the Northern Division in the Islamic Jihad terror organization.

The IDF is also dealing with an upsurge in terror attacks inside Israel. On Monday morning IDF troops spotted a suspicious vehicle in Huwara, South of Nablus. The driver accelerated towards the troops who were able to apprehend the assailant. The suspect was transferred to security forces for further questioning.



Daily distribution of rocket fire during Operation Guardian of the Walls (Source: IDF)© Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center

### Tuesday, 18 May

The attacks continued on Tuesday. The IDF identified, attacked and destroyed nine underground and above-ground rocket launch sites. In addition, an Islamic Jihad terror squad in the central Gaza Strip was struck while preparing to launch rockets towards Israeli territory.

Two civilians were killed and several were wounded by mortar fire adjacent to the Erez Crossing. The Crossing was shelled by the terrorists in an apparent attempt to prevent trucks loaded with humanitarian supplies from entering the Gaza Strip. An IDF soldier was also wounded in the incident.

As of 7 p.m. on Tuesday, approximately 3,700 rockets have been fired from the Gaza Strip at Israeli territory since the beginning of hostilities. Of these, approximately 540 were failed launches that fell in the Gaza Strip.

The Iron Dome Air Defense System has an intercept rate of approximately 90%.

### Wednesday, 19 May

Fifty rockets were launched overnight from Gaza into Israel, bringing the total of missiles launched into Israel as of 7 am Wednesday morning to approximately 3,750 since the beginning

of Operation Guardian of the Walls. Approximately 550 of the launches failed, and the rockets fell in the Gaza Strip. The Iron Dome Air Defense System has an intercept rate of approximately 90%.

In further proof of Hamas' complete disregard for the life and welfare of Palestinians, the organization today fired mortar shells at the Kerem Shalom crossing, preventing the entry of a humanitarian shipment from Jordan into the Gaza Strip. The shipment included trucks with medical equipment destined for Gaza civilians.

This incident follows yesterday's disruption of the humanitarian shipment by Hamas.

The IDF continued to attack terror installation in the Gaza Strip amidst incessant attacks on Israel. Among the strikes was a military compound of the Hamas terror organization's Technological Department. The IDF also spotted and neutralized a terror operative immediately after he fired rockets towards Israeli territory from the eastern Gaza Strip and struck a rocket launcher belonging to the Hamas terror organization in Khan Yunis.

On the northern border, four rockets were fired from Lebanon into Israeli territory. The Iron Dome Aerial Defense System intercepted one of them, two apparently fell in the sea and one in an open area.

The IDF has announced that as of 7 p.m. today, approximately 4000 rockets have been fired from the Gaza Strip at Israeli territory since the beginning of Operation Guardian of the Walls. Of the total rockets fired, 600 failed to launch properly and fell in the Gaza Strip, causing casualties and damage to property. The intercept rate of the Iron Dome system is approximately 90%.

### **Thursday, 20 May**

The IDF continued to attack multiple terror installations across the Gaza Strip amidst incessant attacks on Israel. IDF targets included rocket launching posts located above and below ground and anti-tank installations. Several terror operatives were struck while launching rockets into Israeli territory.

The IDF has announced that as of 7 p.m. today, approximately 4340 rockets have been fired from the Gaza Strip at Israeli territory since the beginning of Operation Guardian of the Walls. Of the total rockets fired, approximately 640 failed to launch properly and fell in the Gaza Strip, causing casualties and damage to property. The intercept rate of the Iron Dome system is approximately 90%.

The Security Cabinet this evening (Thursday) [accepted the recommendation of all of the security officials to accept the Egyptian initiative for a mutual ceasefire without pre-conditions](#), to take effect at a time to be determined.

The political leadership emphasized that it is the reality on the ground that will determine the future of the operation.

**The Hamas terror organization continues to launch rockets into Israel, targeting dense civilian populations in cities, towns and villages. Israel has the right to defend itself and will respond as needed to protect its citizens, as is the right and duty of every country.**

## **Israeli casualties during Operation Guardian of the Walls**

**Twelve civilians and one IDF soldier have been killed since Hamas commenced their attacks on Israel:**

### **Monday 10 May**

- [Soumya Santosh](#), 32, a caregiver from India. She is survived by her husband and nine-year-old daughter.
- [Nella Gurevitz](#), 52, of Ashkelon. She is survived by her husband, who is still hospitalized from the attack.

### **Tuesday 11 May**

- [Leah Yom](#) Tov, 63, of Rishon LeZion, was killed when a rocket hit her home during a heavy barrage of rocket fire on central and southern Israel.

### **Wednesday 12 May**

- [Khalil Awad](#), 52, Awad, a resident of a village near Lod,
- [Nadin Awad](#), 16, daughter Khalil Awad.
- [Staff Sergeant Omer Tabib](#), 21, an IDF soldier from Moshav Elyakim. He is survived by his parents, Tali and Amir, and a younger brother
- [Ido Abigail](#), 5, of Sderot was critically injured when a rocket penetrated the safe room of his family's apartment. His mother is currently in serious condition in hospital.

### **Thursday, 13 May**

- [Miriam Arie](#), of Moshav Shtulim, was injured while running to a shelter. She later succumbed to her wounds.
- [Orly Liron](#), 52, of Moshav Netaim, fell while running to a shelter and was transferred to hospital. An aneurysm in her head ruptured, and after two days of fighting for her life, the doctors were forced to pronounce her death. She is survived by her partner, Nir Tal, and five-year-old son Be'eri.

## Saturday, 15 May

- [Gershon Feanco](#), 55, of Ramat Gan, was killed by fragments from a rocket launched from the Gaza Strip that exploded near his home.

## Monday, 17 May

- [Hava Vaknin](#), 73, of Holon, fell and was injured while rushing for shelter during a rocket attack. She was hospitalized but succumbed to her wounds to days later.

## Tuesday, 18 May

- [Weerawat Krunboorirak](#), 44, an agricultural worker from Thailand, was killed in his living area by mortar fire from the Gaza Strip.
- [Sikharin Sangamram](#), 24, an agricultural worker from Thailand, was killed in his living area by mortar fire from the Gaza Strip.

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## The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center: Operation Guardian of the Walls – Summary

### Overview

- After 11 days of hostilities, Operation Guardian of the Walls ended with a ceasefire at 0200 on May 21, 2021. The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip continued firing rockets until shortly before the deadline, and since the ceasefire there has been a tense quiet in the Gaza Strip. Hamas spokesman Taher al-Nunu and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah said they would adhere to the ceasefire as long as Israel did.
- During the 11 days of Operation Guardian of the Walls more than 4,360 rockets were fired at Israel, of which 3,573 fell inside Israeli territory, the rest falling either inside the Gaza Strip or into the sea. The Iron Dome aerial defense system intercepted about 90% of the rockets. Twelve civilians were killed by rocket fire and an IDF soldier was killed by an anti-tank missile. Several hundred people were injured and there was property damage to homes, schools, industry, commerce and agriculture. The IDF attacked about 1,500 terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip.
- As soon as the ceasefire went into effect Gazans began celebrating in the streets. They also began to understand the extent of the destruction and the results of Israel's attacks. The Palestinians reported serious infrastructure damage, including to water and sewage pipes, roads and communications networks.
- Rebuilding the Gaza Strip began immediately after the ceasefire was announced. Unlike previous rounds of hostilities, Egypt has taken upon itself not only to send money, but to establish a mechanism for transferring the funds and for coordinating donations and the supplies entering the Gaza Strip. According to Egypt, the entire task will be handled

mainly by companies belonging to the Egyptian army in order to limit the influence of companies that operated in the Gaza Strip in the past, especially Turkish companies.

- Despite the destruction, Hamas and PIJ spokesmen celebrate their “victory” and Israel’s “defeat.” According to the Hamas narrative, they attacked not for the Gaza Strip but rather for Jerusalem, al-Aqsa mosque and the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in east Jerusalem. Even though the enlistment of Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem was only partial, the Hamas leadership continues claiming that all the Palestinians participated in the Hamas-led hostilities.

### **Rocket Fire**

- During the 11 days of the operation more than 4,360 rockets and mortar shells were fired at Israel, of which 3,573 penetrated Israeli airspace, about 680 fell inside the Gaza Strip and about 280 fell into the sea. The Iron Dome aerial defense system intercepted about 90% of the rocket fire. Two anti-tank missiles were fired at Israel and several launches were prevented. One killed an IDF soldier when it hit his jeep, the other superficially injured an IDF soldier.
- The joint operations room of the terrorist organizations in Gaza held a press conference where they claimed they had used “new technology” to fire rockets and that Israel had failed when it relied on “deception” to attack and destroy the “resistance” [i.e., terrorist] leaders and operatives. They also claimed they could have continued firing rockets in response to any Israeli “aggression” against the Palestinians (al-Aqsa, May 21, 2021).

### **Israel casualties**

- Despite the massive barrages of rocket and mortar fire, relatively speaking Israeli casualties were few and there was relatively light property damage. Eleven Israeli civilians were directly killed by rocket and mortar fire. One soldier was killed when an anti-tank rocket hit his jeep. Two Israelis died when they ran for shelter. Several hundred people were injured, most of them superficially, and many had anxiety attacks. However, the rocket fire disrupted routine daily life for people living as far north as Netanya, and Jewish-Arab coexistence in the mixed cities was severely damaged by riots that were influenced by the events in the Gaza Strip.

### **Israel’s Response**

During Operation Guardian of the Walls Israel destroyed more than 1,500 terrorist targets, severely damaging the strategic and tactical capabilities of Hamas and the PIJ. Among the targets were the following (IDF spokesman, May 21, 2021):

- Hamas’ tunnel system (the “metro”) in Gaza City, Rafah and Khan Yunis: The IDF destroyed more than 100 kilometers (60 miles) of tunnels used by the Hamas leadership and terrorist operatives as hideouts, and command and control centers. Several attack tunnels in the northern Gaza Strip were also hit.

- Rocket launching capabilities: The IDF carried out about 340 attacks on high-trajectory rocket launchers, 230 attacks on surface-to-surface rocket launchers, and about 35 on mortar shell launchers.
- Weapons-manufacture capabilities: The weapons-manufacturing and military- buildup capabilities of the terrorist organizations were hit hard, research and development operatives were killed, and small facilities for the manufacture of weapons, development centers and weapons storehouses were hit.
- Hamas administration structures: Dozens of administration offices, 11 buildings belonging the internal security forces, and five banks used to transfer funds for terrorist activities were attacked. A senior source in the Hamas police force said that between 15% and 25% of the police management offices and most of its headquarters were partially destroyed (al-Aqsa, May 22, 2021).
- The terrorist infrastructure: The Israeli Air Force attacked dozens of bases, posts, command centers and nine multistory buildings where terrorist activity was coordinated.
- Prevention of attacks: Terrorist invasions were prevented, as were attacks from anti-tank missile squads, seven aerial threats (armed UAVs) and two naval threats (including attacks by unmanned submarine vessels).
- On May 21, 2021, the ministry of health in Gaza reported that 248 Gazans had been killed, including 66 children, 39 women and 17 old people, and that 1,948 had been injured (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, May 21, 2021).
- Hamas exploited the days following the ceasefire to remove the bodies of terrorist operatives from the tunnels. On May 21, 2021, a mass funeral was held in Khan Yunis for Hamas operatives killed in the tunnels in the al-Fakhri and Soufa areas east of Khan Yunis. The bodies were wrapped in Hamas flags (Twitter account of journalist Hassan Aslih, May 21, 2021)

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<https://www.gov.il/en/pages/operation-guardian-of-the-walls-10-may-2021>